(b) if so, the total expenditure required and how it is going to be funded; and

(c) what is plan of conversion during the next five years in Rajasthan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVUAY SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Gauge conversion of following works is going on in Rajasthan and some of them will be converted into broad gauge during the next five year as per availability of resources:—

1. Ajmer-Chittaurgarh-Udaipur
2. Bhildi-Samdari-Jodhpur
3. Luni-Barmer-Munabao
4. Pipar Road-Bilara
5. Agra Fort-Bandikui
6. Sri Ganganagar-Sarupsar
7. Rewari-Sadulpur

Improvement in Announcing System of Railways

1816. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 1208 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 5th March, 1999 and state:

(a) the details of the long-term action plan for improvement in announcement system;

(b) the status of implementation of the action plan; and

(c) the status of the proposal for broadening the over-bridge, alongwith the cost estimate and the time required to complete the work?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (c) An action plan has been drawn up for Bidhannagar Railway Station which includes certain additions and alterations and improvement in public address system. The work has been sanctioned at a cost of Rs. 30.53 lakhs

and taken up on out of turn basis. This is targetted to be completed by 31st March, 2000. However, widening of foot over bridge is not feasible due to existence of girder bridges at the station.

Development of Railways in Maharashtra

1817. SHRI SURYABHAN PATIL VAHADANE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plan for expansion and development of Railways in Maharashtra;

(b) if so, the details therefor;

(c) the estimated cost thereof; and

(d) whether Government propose to extend the rail facility to the Adivasi areas in Maharashtra; if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (d) Taking up of Railway projects is an exercise based on the operational importance of the project, its physical progress, national and strategic considerations, social relevance, availability of resources, etc. While formulating Railway plans and projects, the need to maintain a proper regional balance is also kept in mind. State/regional boundaries per se are not a criterion for deciding on Railway investments, especially when a number of Railway projects span across more than one state.

However, a number of Railway projects have been undertaken in Maharashtra including in its Adivasi areas. Details of these projects are given in the Statement.

Statement

Details of Railway Projects in Maharashtra

S. No.	Name of Project	Rly.	Year of Approval	KMs	Cost (In Crores of Rs.)
New Line		"Central	1993-	138	175.30
1.	Amrawati-Narkhed	Central	94	250	353.08
2.	Ahmednagar-Beed-parli		1995-		